

Рецензия

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Опыт фальсификации истории России в контексте текущего противостояния России и Запада [рецензия на монографию Карабущенко П. Л., Вартумяна А. А. Англосаксы. Фальсификация политической истории (опыт исторической герменевтики). М.: ИНФРА-М, 2023. 367 с.]

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Аннотация. Данная рецензия ставит своей задачей исследовать монографию П.Л. Карабущенко и А.А. Вартумяна «Англосаксы. Фальсификация политической истории (опыт исторической герменевтики)» и проанализировать ее значимость в рамках современных работ по изучению информационных войн. Масштабное исследование профессора Астраханского государственного университета Павла Карабущенко и профессора Северо-Кавказского федерального университета Арушана Вартумяна посвящена проблеме, которую многие отечественные политики, аналитики и рядовые граждане считают ключевой с точки зрения будущего России – борьбы с искажениями российской истории и фальсификации текущей российской политики.

Ключевые слова: политическая история, фальсификация, элиты, информационные войны, англосаксонский мир, Россия

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Review

The experience of falsifying russian history in the context of the current confrontation between Russia and the West [review on the monograph of Karabushchenko PL, Vartumyan AA. The Anglo-Saxons. Falsification of political history (the experience of historical hermeneutics). Moscow: INFRA-M, 2023. 367 p.]

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Abstract. *This review aims to investigate the monograph by P.L. Karabushchenko and A.A. Vartumyan "The Anglo-Saxons. Falsification of political history (the experience of historical hermeneutics)" and analyze its significance in the framework of modern works on the study of information warfare. A large-scale study by Professor Pavel Karabushchenko of Astrakhan State University and Professor Arushan Vartumyan of the North-Caucasus Federal University is devoted to a problem that many domestic politicians, analysts and ordinary citizens consider key from the point of view of the future of Russia – the fight against distortions of Russian history and falsification of current Russian politics.*

Keywords: political history, falsification, elites, information wars, Anglo-Saxon world, Russia

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Introduction. This work is the result of many years of research into the problem of falsification of Anglo-Saxon history, which was carried out by its political elites throughout its history. Several circumstances make the book an extraordinary phenomenon in the scientific literature on the history of international relations, information wars and political transformation.

First. The study is striking in the enormous volume of work done by the authors. In the monograph, Pavel Karabushchenko and Arushan Vartumyan critically analyze the nature of information wars in the Anglo-Saxon world on 367 pages. It seems that there is not a single serious literary source on this topic that would have escaped the attention of the authors. The volume of work done by the authors is evidenced by the fact that the book contains about a thousand references to sources, often with extensive comments on them. In addition, the monograph is written on the basis of a large amount of theoretical and empirical material.

Second. The appeal to the phenomenon of Anglo-Saxon falsification of history can be considered an extremely valuable and analytically promising part of the author's entire concept. It is well known that falsification acts as a symbol of the decline and degradation of a political - system that cannot tell the truth about itself. In general, the authors have the right to speak of a whole school of historical falsifiers of the political history of Great Britain. As P. L. Karabushchenko and A. A. Vartumyan emphasize, "where there are crimes, there is also falsification, as a desire to present what happened in a light favorable to the authorities (the ruling elite)" (p. 7).

Third. The study under consideration is one of those works whose relevance has become truly urgent. This has become especially topical in the atmosphere of escalating information warfare between Russia and the collective West, which reached its peak after the start of the Russian Central Military District in Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The roots of this discontent go back to the early years of the 21st century, especially after the United States supported a series of "color" revolutions in Georgia in 2003, in Ukraine in 2004 and 2014, and in Kyrgyzstan in 2005. This process was accompanied by another round of post-Soviet NATO expansion near Russia's borders. In parallel with this, the Western media was becoming increasingly contemptuous and condemning in relation to Russia and Putin personally. Anti-Russian and anti-Putin motivation was also characteristic of such expert and analytical centers as the Council on Foreign Relations (Council on Foreign Relations), who released a report in March 2006 called "Russia's Wrong Direction." The report's crude and offensive tone embarrassed even many of Putin's critics.¹ In the West, there was increasing talk of the Russian leader following a path dictated for centuries by his authoritarian predecessors. The Putin era was characterized as a time of continuous violence and growing authoritarianism, during which Putin deliberately stoked anti-Western sentiments to his own advantage.

¹ "Russia's Wrong Direction. What the US Can and Should Do" Council on Foreign Relations. March 2006. Available from: www.cfr.org/publication/9997 [Accessed 22 September 2022].

In the context of what has been said, the task set by P.L. Karabushchenko and A.A. Vartumyan in their book: “the fight against the ‘friends’ and enemies of Russia, who use dirty technologies of blatant Russophobia against it” (p. 4), seems more relevant than ever.

Conceptual framework and research methods. Based on the fact that any good research should be based on a detailed description of the original concepts, the authors meticulously analyze in the introduction to their book the meaning and structure of such key concepts as “falsification” and “information war”. The author's concept is distinguished by considerable originality and can be characterized as “critical political history”, which fights against the deliberate distortion of history to suit a specific political situation. The hermeneutic approach was chosen as the conceptual framework within which the authors address their key tasks. As P. L. Karabushchenko and A. A. Vartumyan state, the *hermeneutic method* allows researchers to penetrate into the depths of the meaning of the text by revealing its true content. This research approach allows not only to consider existing historical and political texts, but also to combine and, thus, increase the heuristic potential of other analytical methods. As a result, in the work under consideration, political hermeneutics relies not only on its own methodological potential, but also on the possibilities of such methods as dialectics, comparative studies, and semiotics. Together with the above methods, hermeneutics can become the gravedigger of any, even the most sophisticated, falsification (pp. 6-11).

The Nature of Anglo-Saxon Falsification of Russian History. In the first part of the book, “British History from Sunrise to Sunset,” consisting of two chapters, the authors provide a very convincing description of the social Darwinian and conquering context in which the British dynasties and states were formed. These features played a primary role in adequately understanding the driving forces, pace, and direction of the formation of the British Empire. The authors demonstrate a detailed and deep analysis of the Russophobic versions dominating English history, built on falsification, espionage, racism, and regicide. This in itself allows us to introduce extremely useful and significant facts into social science, which are also very instructive in practical terms, since they allow us to better imagine the circumstances of the transformation of the political function of Russophobia. The value of the study from the point of view of producing new knowledge lies in the operationalization of the category of “Anglo-Saxon colonial and genocidal practices” in relation to various aspects of British colonial rule. Their introduction into research practice should be recognized as a significant innovation by P.L. Karabushchenko and A.A. Vartumyan.

In the historical chapter, the authors rightly note that in Anglo-Saxon history, racial, colonial and genocidal practices went hand in hand. That it was precisely this bloody trail that accompanied the creation of not only the British Empire, but also the United States of America, whose first presidents were exemplary plantation owners and slave owners. Through such a study, the reader will better understand the drama of genocide and apartheid of those peoples whose lands the “civilized” Anglo-Saxon set foot on.

The second part of the study “USA - Black Empire of Death”, consisting of seven (!) chapters, contains stories dedicated to the key aspects of international crimes of the Anglo-Saxon world in the 20th and 21st centuries, the falsification of history in the form of double standards, the British style of domination in the form of the principle of “divide and rule”, the bloody consequences of the partition of India, the stunning Russophobia of the American-British elite. In the second and fourth chapters of the second part of their book, P.L. Karabushchenko and A.A. Vartumyan made the most of the empirical and statistical material they collected. The authors, not without reason, claim that the British used the most brutal methods of waging war in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer armed conflict. It was then that the English colonial administration used concentration camps to control and pacify the Boer population - long before the Nazi practices of the Holocaust. One cannot but agree with the authors that the bombings of Dresden and Tokyo, along with the nuclear attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are exemplary examples of Anglo-American war crimes. One should not forget that the bad colonial continuity has passed from the 20th century into the 21st century. This time, the Anglo-Americans have

crossed all conceivable boundaries of self-confidence in implementing their hegemonic plans. These include the invasion of Iraq in the spring of 2003 and Afghanistan, the self-confident policy of "overthrowing regimes" based on the unlimited use of force. This aggression was accompanied by unmotivated reprisals against civilians, the use of torture and sophisticated abuse. The American prisons of Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo have become a sad symbol of this policy. It is not surprising that these "crusades," hypocritically declared a "struggle for democracy," ultimately ended with the inglorious withdrawal of Anglo-American troops from Iraq and the flight of Americans from Afghanistan.

The monograph expresses several original, but controversial ideas. First of all, it concerns the use of the term "carnival culture" (pp. 18-21). In my opinion, it is not entirely correct to use the phenomenon of carnival culture, described by the Soviet philosopher and cultural scientist Mikhail Bakhtin, as a synonym for political falsification. Carnival culture is a complex social phenomenon that cannot be associated with primitive practices of political substitution and distortion of history. Secondly, the use of the term "Anglo-Saxon political regime" (p. 8) raises questions. It is difficult to understand what this designation means and what criteria the authors and researchers use to specifically single it out. It seems that the authors used this concept to increase their accusatory energy aimed at debunking the unsightly actions of the Anglo-Saxon elites in relation to Russia.

Of course, like any creative innovative work, the study by P. Karabushchenko and A. Vartumyan is not without its own controversial points and shortcomings. It is well known that the value of any scientific research is determined by the extent to which its provisions are subject to a barrage of refutations. The most controversial are the authors' conclusions regarding the role of the political elite in the production of ideological symbols and meanings. Here is what is said on the pages of the book: "The national history of England was not written by the English people, but by the English political elite, attracting for this purpose the most capable representatives of the creative elite. Narratives of symbolic politics, with due persistence and consistency of power and elite, sooner or later become part of the current picture of the world." (p. 15). The authors, being well-known elitologists in Russia, must understand that nations do not write history. History is written by the elites as the most educated and intellectually prepared representatives of the nation. Another phrase from the book that raises questions: "Morality and politics are incompatible things for English history. The history of England is the history of the triumph of absolute Machiavellianism." (p. 16). Here again it is necessary to note that this situation in politics is absolutely normal. Morality and politics are incompatible things not only for the English government, but for any government. In politics there is not only no morality, but also such concepts as friendship, love, affection, etc. Interests, political expediency and current egoisms triumph in politics – things that are difficult to reconcile with morality and virtue.

Further, analyzing the theory and practice of historical falsification of Russian history by the Anglo-Saxon elites, the authors found themselves faced with the need to pose questions that had never been asked. They concern the unsuccessful attempts of the Russian post-Soviet government to become part of the West. The authors begin their book with the position that "after the return of Crimea to Russia (2014), Moscow's relations with the countries of the collective West sharply worsened, taking on the character of a protracted acute political crisis.... The Anglo-Saxon elites declared a real information war on Russia, unleashing a full-scale falsification against it, aimed at discrediting its image." (p. 3).

It seems that the turn to the "besieged fortress" policy in Russia did not occur in connection with the Ukrainian events of 2013-2014 and the world's reaction to Russia's actions in Ukraine in 2022. This turn has been happening quite dramatically since the beginning of the 21st century and had several stages. An important milestone that interrupted the measured course of the "end of history" and globalization of the 1990s was the events of September 11, 2001 in the United States and the retaliatory measures of America and its allies as part of the declared war on "international terrorism". At that time, Russia demonstrated its unconditional support for the United States. And a little earlier, during his inauguration, V. Putin

placed his hopes on the West. Vladimir Putin was the first head of state to call George Bush Jr. immediately after the events of September 11, 2001, expressing his support to him. Putin then gave an interesting speech in the German Bundestag on September 25, 2001, 14 days after the events of September 11. The essence of his proposal was a constructive proposal to view Russia not as a resource appendage, but as part of Greater Europe.

However, things did not turn out as the Kremlin had expected. The Kremlin's support for the United States in the fight against "international terrorism" was quite significant. However, since the end of the Cold War, the United States has generally behaved with deliberate inattention towards Russia, unless it needed it for something specific. Too often, Russian politicians and experts have declared that everything the Americans do is very beneficial to Russia. And that Russia is "doomed" to partner with the West². With such an assessment, the "Western partners" became even more convinced of their infallibility, as well as the fact that any actions by the United States would not only be justified, but also supported by the Russian side. The main problem of the Russian political class in the early Putin era was residual "Atlanticism" - an unbridled desire to get closer to the West. "Residual" because the Russian ruling class of Putin's conscription remained faithful to this outdated perestroika illusion for too long. The early Putin Kremlin wanted to enter the "world community" on the American "freedom train" within the framework of the "anti-terrorist consensus." Only after a series of "color revolutions" along Russia's entire border perimeter, after the latter's fierce criticism from the US and the EU for "retreating from democracy," and then for gas conflicts with Ukraine, did Putin's Russia begin to lose all illusions about close cooperation with the West. All this speaks not only to how everything has changed since 2001, but also to the school of losses that Russia's political elite has gone through on the path to its geopolitical maturation.

Conclusion. The critical remarks made regarding various aspects of the information wars between Russia and the Atlantic world do not detract from the considerable merits of the monograph by Pavel Karabushchenko and Arushan Vartumyan under review. Moreover, these remarks are made in accordance with the high professional level of analysis, the broad scope and the enormous work on systematization of large-scale information presented in the study. The monograph is undoubtedly a significant contribution to the social sciences and promotes open public discussion on the problems of falsification of national history.

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² At that time, the well-known international relations scholar and Vice-Rector of MGIMO (U) MFA A. Bogaturov even expressed hope for a close Russian-American partnership in the matter of forming Central and South Asian energy corridors and creating a joint Russian-American military infrastructure along them. The article ends with the dreamy words: "It would be good if so." (A. Bogaturov. Indo-Siberian Corridor in the Strategy of Counter-Terrorism // NG-Dipkurier. 2005. October 24. P. 14).

ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ

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